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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 VILNIUS 000519

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB, S/CT, DS/IP/EUR, AND DS/ITA/EUR

TALLINN FOR FBI

MOSCOW FOR DAO, RSO, AND FBI

DIA PASS TO DHO-2 AND JITF-CT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2015

TAGS:

SUBJECT: Weapons Discovered Near Lithuanian Refugee
Reception Center Housing Chechens

Ref: Vilnius 1106

1. (U) Classified By RSO Brent A. Barker. Reason 1.5
(D).

2. (S) Summary. The Lithuanian Police recently disclosed to us that they discovered a significant cache of weapons last June near a Refugee Center outside of Kaunas. The weapons included Russian Flame Rocket Launchers, assault rifles, and explosives. The Police believe the weapons belonged to Chechens residing at the Refugee Reception Center. End summary.

3. (C) On April 22, the Deputy Director of the Forensics Lab and the Head of the International Office of the Lithuanian Police requested technical assistance from RSO regarding a weapons cache discovered last year. Lithuanian children playing last June in the forest discovered several items buried approximately 200 meters from the Rukla Refugee Reception Center, a 350-person facility near the central Lithuanian city of Kaunas. Although buried in the ground, the items had been partially uncovered by weather. The children dug, further uncovering the cache. When they realized there were weapons among the buried items, they told their parents. The parents reported the discovery to the local Police.

4. (C) The following items were discovered:

Russian RPO-A Shmel 93mm Recoilless Infantry Flame
Thrower / Launcher (Quantity 2)

AK-47 Assault Rifles (Quantity 2)

Ammunition and Magazines for AK-47

Mobile Phone modified to act as an IED triggering
device

Remote Control IED triggering device

TNT 400 grams (Quantity 1 Block). The Block had
Russian Markings

TNT 200 grams each (Quantity 3 Block) wrapped together
with RDX sheet between each Block.

Plastic Explosives 200 grams each (Quantity 3 Block).
The covers form the explosives had been removed.

RSO has digital photos of the flame launchers and
triggering devices.

5. (C) The Police suspect that the items discovered belonged to Chechens. While they admit that they cannot confirm this, they base their suspicion on the fact that Chechens are regularly housed at the Rukla Refugee Reception Center and there were Chechens there at the time the weapons were discovered. In addition, the Police say that Lithuanian organized crime has never used weapons such as Flame Launchers, and they see no practical reason that they would begin to use them. The Police took fingerprint and DNA samples from the recovered items but found no matches.

6. (C) Upon X-Raying the two Flame Launchers, the Police found that the design did not match the technical information that they had. They asked for RSO assistance to determine the best way to dispose of the Flame Launchers (both of which had had their data plates removed).

7. (S) The Defense Attach's Office expressed an interest in taking possession of the Flame Launchers for examination by technical experts. The Police have agreed to turn over the two Flame Launchers to us. The

DAO is making arrangements to take possession of the weapons and forward them to the appropriate experts.

18. (S) The Police admit that they have no firm evidence of where the items came from or what their final destination was. The Police said that they have not contacted Russian authorities to inform them of the discovery or request technical information.

19. (S) The RAO contacted the State Security Department (Lithuania's Intelligence Service, known by its Lithuanian acronym VSD) about this discovery. VSD officials stated that an informant had reported one anti-tank 81mm rocket in the same area. RSO spoke again to the Police investigators to confirm the information about how the items in their possession were discovered. The follow-up information from the Police confirms that the VSD information referred to another, separate incident.

10.(S) Comment. This is a disturbing development, as it provides the first indication we are aware of that Lithuania may be serving as a weapons transit route. Previous information indicated that Chechens residing in Lithuania were involved in petty crime but otherwise were not a threat, although the basing of a pro-Chechen website in Lithuania has been an intermittent source of tension between Russia and the GOL (reftel). The Police are concerned about the arms discovery, but downplay the possibility of a terrorist threat in Lithuania from Chechens or anyone else. We are less serene, and will work with the police and other GOL security officials to take this discovery seriously. The information that our investigators develop when they examine the weapons will give us an opportunity to reinvigorate the Lithuanian effort.

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